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METHODS OF COOPERATIVE AND FEDERATIVE EFFORTS BY THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNIONS

American Section

Report of Commission VI

to

THE UNIVERSAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE
ON LIFE AND WORK

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UNIVERSAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE
ON LIFE AND WORK

Commission Reports

I. The Church's Obligation in View of God's Purpose for the World.

II. The Church and Economic and Industrial Problems.

III. The Church and Social and Moral Problems.

IV. The Church and International Relations.

V. The Church and Education.

VI. Methods of Co-operative and Federative Efforts By the Christian Communions.

GENERAL PREFACE

A few words should be written about the inception of The Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work. In the summer of 1919 the International Committee of the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches met at The Hague. This was the first meeting of an international character held after the signing of the Armistice, if one excepts a small gathering of labor leaders. About sixty leaders of the Churches were present, representing nearly all the Protestant Communions and most of the countries of Europe. Ten or twelve delegates were present from America.

The meetings at The Hague developed so sweet and reasonable an atmosphere, at a time when great bitterness prevailed everywhere, and the delegates present expressed themselves so strongly as to the un-Christian character of war and the necessity of establishing a world order on a new and Christian basis, that several of the delegates felt strongly that the time had come for the Churches officially to get together and say what these Churchmen semi-officially were saying. As a result Archbishop Soederblom of Sweden, Dr. Charles S. Macfarland of America, the Dean of Canterbury, Dr. Henry A. Atkinson and others held an informal meeting to discuss the possibility of bringing the Churches of the world together for a Conference, where the Churches could utter their united conviction on international matters and all other matters with which society would have to deal in the reconstruction of civilization and the building of a new and better civilization on the ruins of the old, which lay all about them.

This preliminary meeting was not altogether spontaneous for on two separate occasions during the progress of the war, Archbishop Soederblom had communicated with the Churches of Europe and America regarding the possibility of such a conference and the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America had suggested that a Conference of the Federated bodies of Churches in all the countries might meet together after the war. The unanimous opinion of the unofficial group at The Hague was that a committee should be appointed to bring the leaders of the Churches together with the aim of convincing them of the necessity of such a world gathering of the Churches ,and asking them to take the matter up with their respective denominations. This committee went from The Hague to Paris and brought together as many of the leaders of the Churches as possible upon such short notice. This meeting became greatly interested in the project and requested Dr. Frederick Lynch, Chairman of the Committee on Ecumenical Conference of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America to arrange for a preliminary meeting of the Churches the following summer.

Dr. Lynch proceeded from Paris to London and had several interviews with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. F. B. Myers, Dr. Thomas Nightingale, Dr. J. H. Shakespeare and others. Meantime, Archbishop Soderbloom undertook to interest the Scandinavian Churches and Dr. Choisy

the Swiss Churches. Sufficient interest was aroused to warrant the calling of a preliminary Conference at Geneva in the summer of 1920.

As a result of the procedures recorded above, one hundred delegates assembled at Geneva in August of 1920. A three days session was held and the Conference gradually began to assume shape. Great interest was manifested and all present expressed themselves to the effect that the Church Universal had a great opportunity to exert a determining influence upon the new order that must follow the war. Furthermore the world was waiting for some great pronouncement from the Churches upon such questions as war and peace, the industrial order; such immediate problems as those having to do with intemperance and vice and upon all ethical and moral questions. It was felt that a positive and commanding utterance of the Churches in these trying years would do much to encourage a disheartened world and would make it much easier for those who were trying to reconstruct the world on a Christian basis to carry on this high task. There was much confusion in the world as to just where the Church did stand on these great problems disturbing the minds of men. The conviction was expressed that only as the rule of life laid down by the gospels became the law of nations could any hope for security and peace be found or the great sores of the world be healed.

Furthermore it was felt by all that whatever new international machinery might be set up or whatever new industrial order might arise, it was only as these were permeated by the spirit of Jesus Christ that they would fulfill the high hopes of their founders. It was also strongly felt that two great blessings might ensue from such a Conference. On the one hand all individual communions would profit by this period of common intercourse, especially those communions that had greatly suffered from the war. They would be made strong in the consciousness of the oneness of all Christ's disciples. On the other hand the coming together, if only for a month, of all the Churches of the world, to cooperate in the common task of redeeming the world order, and to make some great common pronouncement on the place of Christ in our civilization would be a great object lesson to the world.

At Geneva a large International Committee was set up which was divided into four groups, one for America, one for the British Empire, one for the European Protestant churches and the fourth representing the Orthodox Eastern Church. The International Committee appointed a smaller Executive Committee, which held three meetings in successive years, one at Peterborough, England, one at Zurich, Switzerland and one at Amsterdam, Holland. In August, 1922, the International Committee itself met at Helsingborg, Sweden, and was very fully attended by delegates from all the communions and nations. At this meeting the programme for the Conference assumed final shape. It was voted that the program for Stockholm should include the following groups of subjects:

1. The Church's Obligation in view of God's purpose for the world.
2. The Church and Economic and Industrial Problems.
3. The Church and Social and Moral Problems.
4. The Church and International Relations.
5. The Church and Christian Education.
6. Methods of Co-operative and Federative Efforts by the Christian Communions.

The reports which followed are in fulfillment of this vote taken at Helsingborg. In April, 1924, the full Committee met again at Birmingham, England, in connection with C. O. P. E. C. and reviewed the progress made upon the reports and dealt specifically with plans for the Stockholm meeting.

This is in brief the history of The Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work, and is the explanation of the reports which follow. These reports have been prepared with great care by the leaders of the Churches and by experts in the several questions discussed. They are submitted to the Conference in the hope that the Conference will receive them in the same spirit in which they have been written, i.e. in the endeavor to find the common consciousness of the Churches upon these subjects and to voice its united feeling.

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METHODS OF COOPERATIVE AND FEDERATIVE EFFORTS BY THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNIONS

Other reports presented to the Conference have considered various phases in the Church's responsibility in the world. Evangelism and missions, religious education, social service, the Christianizing of our international life—these and other tasks of the Church have been studied. But all these important questions force us back to a still deeper question, the answer to which conditions success in every field. It is the question of the nature and constitution of the Church itself. What kind of a Church must we have in order to deal most effectively with the great problems with which modern civilization confronts us? Can isolated denominations, functioning independently of each other, speak with a voice that will command the world's attention? Can they, without some carefully planned consolidation of their influence, successfully oppose the massed forces of skepticism, selfishness and evil? Can separated churches bear a clear enough testimony to their essential unity of conviction, purpose and spirit, to lead the world to Christ as the one Lord and Saviour?

That the Christian churches throughout the world already possess an underlying spiritual unity, derived from their loyalty to a common Lord, we are profoundly convinced. We do not so much need to create unity as to recognize the inner unity that is here. Our main problem is to find the way of *expressing in voice and action* the essential oneness that is already ours.

That substantial progress has already been made in America in developing the needed agencies for such united action we believe the following pages will show. This progress centers not around a plan of organic union, on the basis of complete agreement as to doctrine and polity, but around the cooperation of the evangelical denominations in programs of practical Christian service. Without interfering in any way with the authority or autonomy of the several denominations in matters of creed or organization, a process of federation for the more effective performance of common tasks has been at work that is both ministering to the spirit of unity and making the Church a more powerful force in the national life. What has been done is only a modest beginning, but it clearly demonstrates the practicability not only of larger cooperation among the Christian forces of our own land but also of a cooperation transcending all boundaries of nation and race.

The modern world has so clearly become a single neighborhood, with even the remotest sections brought near to each other, that Christian cooperation can no longer be thought of as a national problem alone. In a world that has become one through economic and social interdependence, the Christian Church must in some way be able to think and act as one. Moreover, the Church must always be, by virtue of its very nature, a supra-national body, the fellowship of all men everywhere who

are bound together by their faith in one God as their Father and by their loyalty to the same Divine Lord and Saviour. In the words of an unknown writer of the Second Century:

> "What the soul is in the body, that are Christians in the world. For the soul holds the body together and Christians hold the world together. This illustrious position has been assigned to them of God, which it were unlawful for them ever to forsake."

We shall give especial consideration, therefore, to the question as to how far the Church today is in a position to fulfill this fundamental Christian ideal.

The development of cooperation among the Christian churches we shall consider under the following six heads:

I. Achievements and Lessons in American Experience.
II. Achievements and Lessons in Cooperation in Other Lands.
III. Achievements in Cooperation of the Western and Eastern Churches.
IV. Achievements and Lessons in International Cooperation.
V. Principles which should Govern the Further Development of Cooperation.
VI. Advanced Steps Now Called For.

I. ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS IN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

1. In the Local Field

The cooperation of churches as churches in American communities has grown out of the earlier cooperation of church members as individuals. Individual Christians, recognizing some need of the community not supplied by the unrelated and sometimes rival churches, banded themselves together to meet this need. Among the foremost illustrations were the united efforts for deepening the evangelistic and spiritual life, under the far-reaching leadership of men like Dwight L. Moody, a generation ago. Many of our present-day organizations, like the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Young Men's Christian Association, and various philanthropic and reform organizations which receive their inspiration and their resources from the churches, also had their genesis in the coming together of individuals from various churches in the interest of some common task.

The growth of the sense of responsibility for the whole community on the part of the churches, the recognition of the fact that many important tasks could only be met by combined efforts, the success and the fellowship resulting from occasional cooperation of the laymen and clergymen of different churches, gradually led to a definite conviction of the cardinal importance of developing systematic *cooperation among the churches themselves in their organized capacity.* Instead of continuing to do the work of the churches without official authority or support,

those who were interested in cooperation began to work out plans by which they could have the clear sanction, guidance and support of the churches. This has been accomplished in many a community, chiefly during the last fifteen years, by the formation of a cooperative body, usually called a "Council of Churches" or "Federation of Churches." Needless to say, the development of this cooperative movement has been beset with many obstacles, due to the indifference or misunderstanding or prejudice among church people, but it is now clear that the first experimental stage has been successfully passed.

The Council of Churches is a central body whose members are elected by the churches themselves. The local church is the unit of authority. Each church may elect the pastor and two or more lay delegates, the number depending on the size of the church. These delegates constitute the Assembly of the Council (or Federation) of Churches. In a few of the larger cities, the unit that elects the delegates is not the single congregation but the ecclesiastical body composed of the churches of each denomination in that area, as the presbytery or classis or association or district.

An executive committee elected by the Council directs the united work from month to month. In the large cities, central headquarters are established and an executive is employed, the budget being provided by appropriations from the constituent churches, supplemented by gifts of individuals. The headquarters is the clearing house for the Protestant churches of the city and, to a certain extent, for other community organizations with which cooperation is desired.

At present forty-five cities in the United States have employed executives for cooperative work. There are many other cities in which the Councils of Churches depend upon volunteer leadership entirely. The work of such Councils, of course, is confronted with greater difficulties. In a number of cities of less than 100,000 population the Y. M. C. A., through its employed leadership, has rendered valuable service to the Council of Churches.

Several cities have had more than ten years of successful cooperative experience in these Church Councils. The programs have now become large and varied, and have in most cases been worked out in close cooperation with the Federal Council of the Churches, as the national interdenominational organization, which helps to organize them and to promote their interests. The following brief statement indicates what experience has been proved to be the main cooperative tasks to be carried on by a Council of Churches in a community:

(a) An established center for the Protestant forces of the city is maintained, and a bureau of information on religious, social and civic affairs for use of pulpit, press, church and community workers.

(b) Evangelism, the recruiting of the membership of the churches, is made more effective through a plan of simultaneous efforts. Primary dependence is placed on the pastors and officers of the

churches through their year-round work, rather than upon spectacular speakers from the outside. There is enough simultaneity to stimulate all, to reach those that might not be reached otherwise, but not of a character to lessen the responsibility of each congregation.

(c) Religious education is promoted by teacher-training institutes for workers of all denominations, by Daily Vacation Bible Schools and by week-day religious education, the time for the latter being taken out of the public school schedule.

(d) A ministry to unfortunate victims of unsocial and unchristian conditions is carried on in hospitals, infirmaries, reform schools, prisons and other charitable and penal institutions, many of which would otherwise receive little or no attention.

(e) New churches are located and old churches relocated in accordance with a comity agreement, so that they are erected where they can be of most service to the city and where there will be less duplication of effort. The decision of the Council in all such matters is advisory only, but its recommendations are usually followed.

(f) The churches' influence on the social life of the community is multiplied manifold by their united action. Law violation is lessened by creating Christian public opinion and giving moral support to public officials in the fulfillment of their duty. Helpful influences are brought to bear on industrial life through conferences of employers and employees with ministers of all denominations on the application of Christian principles to industry. Race relations are made more brotherly by securing the cooperation of the Christian leadership of the various races. Interest is awakened in world peace by public meetings and by messages to the Government expressing the united convictions of the churches.

(g) Religious publicity is made more powerful because the Council of Churches speaks for all the churches in the interest of the whole community. A desire for religious news has been created so that many daily papers on their own initiative seek to render service to the churches.

Not only in the local community but also in the larger areas of several of the States that comprise the United States has interchurch cooperation been developed. The principles of organization and aims of the State Councils of Churches are similar to those of local federations above described. Their special significance may be summarized as follows:

1. The States are the foundation of the American system of federal government. To exert their full influence for Christian ideals in legislation and public life, the churches are finding that they must be able to act as a unit throughout the whole state.

2. The denominational conferences, synods, dioceses, etc., generally follow state boundaries. Councils consisting of their official delegates

possess an ecclesiastical significance and an influence which local congregations cannot give. This is especially helpful in comity adjustments to prevent and remove overlapping of churches.

3. The State Federation, including every church, rural as well as urban, isolated as well as grouped, can deal with the distinctive problems of the rural church. Local cooperation can be systematically promoted; and for the smaller communities, in which it is not possible to employ an executive, the State Federation office furnishes a clearing house of experience and expert advice.

Some of the policies which have resulted from the experience of ten years of working for cooperation in city and in state are as follows:

(a) Local autonomy prevails in the organization. The churches of each community determine the form of organization, the personnel, the financial policy and the program of work.

(b) The churches give to the Council authority to secure funds for the work and usually contribute to it, but the Council cannot assess the churches. All gifts are voluntary.

(c) The churches give to the Council authority to undertake work that is a matter of concern to all, but the Council has no authority over any church in the Council.

(d) The Council of Churches is not in reality another organization, but the coordination of the Christian forces of the city or state.

2. In the National Field

A. In the United States

In the national field, as in the local community, two types of cooperative organizations have developed. The older form, represented by such agencies as the Evangelical Alliance and the American Bible Society, seeks to unify Christian activity by bringing together persons who belong to various denominations, but who do not officially represent the denominations from which they come. Some sort of official approval however, from the church leaders, is commonly obtained. Such an organization may be called undenominational. The Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations are of this type in that they are free from ecclesiastical control, although the boards of management of both their national and their local organizations have a large lay constituency drawn from all evangelical denominations. Another significant illustration is the Student Volunteer Movement, which, while an independent organization, functions as a recruiting agency for all the Protestant foreign missionary boards in America.

The second or more strictly interdenominational type, is represented by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, which was created in 1908 by the denominations themselves after several years of discussion, and the governing bodies of which are appointed directly by the constituent denominations. The national assemblies, conferences or conventions of twenty-six denominations have each

taken official action, approving the Constitution of the Council. In addition, the United Lutheran Church is a "consultative member," and the Protestant Episcopal Church cooperates through its Department of Christian Social Service.

The preamble to the Constitution declares that the Council is formed in order "more fully to manifest the essential oneness of the Christian churches of America, in Jesus Christ as their divine Lord and Saviour." Its basis, accordingly, is distinctly evangelical and all the constituent denominations belong to the evangelical group.

The Council, to quote the Constitution again, "has no authority to draw up a common creed or form of government or of worship," all these rights continuing, as formerly, to be the responsibility of each denomination. The Council cannot limit the autonomy of any of the constituent bodies in any way. Its purpose is rather to carry on such activities as the denominations are ready to carry on through a co-operative agency. Its program and policies are determined by the quadrennial sessions of the Council as a whole, the annual meetings of the Executive Committee and the monthly meetings of the Administrative Committee, the members of all of which are officially named by the constituent denominations.

The purposes of the American Federal Council are clearly in line with the spirit and interests of the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work. The Constitution of the Council defines its objects to be: "to express the fellowship and Catholic unity of the Christian Church" and "to secure a larger combined influence for the churches of Christ in all matters affecting the moral and social condition of the people so as to promote the application of the law of Christ in every relation of human life."

Other illustrations of a strictly interdenominational type of organization in the United States are the several Councils of Home and Foreign Missions and of Educational Boards, whose control is under committees created by the Boards of the various denominations, and which provide for conference, study and activity in their specialized fields. These "inter-board" agencies (as they may more accurately be called) include the following, the name in each case suggesting its sphere of interest: The Foreign Missions Conference of North America, the Home Missions Council, the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions, The Council of Women for Home Missions, the International Council of Religious Education, the Council of Church Boards of Education. These various agencies are related to the Federal Council of the Churches by being represented on its Administrative Committee, with a view to preventing friction or duplication of effort.

The chief purpose of the "inter-board" agencies is not to bring the denominations themselves into closer cooperation and fellowship, but to furnish needed central agencies for dealing with administrative problems of common concern. The Foreign Missions Conference of North America, the oldest of these organizations, may be taken as an illustra-

tion of their character and service. Beginning in 1893 as an unappointed body of officers of the mission boards of the United States and Canada, it became in 1901 officially representative of the boards. In 1907 it had developed to the point of creating a standing committee known as the Committee of Reference and Counsel. It has since carried on many extensive studies and investigations of great value to all the boards, functioned for the boards in necessary approaches to governments in matters affecting missionary work, provided for the discussion of the more important issues in missionary administration and stimulated the spirit of cooperation, both among the boards at home and the agencies on the foreign field.

The Home Missions Council, organized in 1907, has, through standing committees and an annual meeting, prompted co-operative thought, study and planning in most of the distinctive features of home mission work. It is—in affiliated action with the Council of Women for Home Missions—composed of the national administrators of sixty-three boards of twenty-one denominations. Deputations sent to confer with the executives of missionary work in Western States have initiated state-wide joint studies of neglected fields. As one result, the responsible regional administrators in seven Northwestern States have definitely organized for "every-community service." Areas are allocated. Duplication of effort is being eliminated. Concerted advance is the keynote.

The development of the interdenominational movement in the United States has taken place, in the main, during the last twenty years. It ought not to be forgotten, however, that as much as a century ago there was a period of interdenominational emphasis that later subsided. The "plan of union" between the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists in the occupation of new territory in the West was a conspicuous illustration. More recently the Interchurch World Movement, organized in 1918 for the purpose of attempting rapidly a large immediate task, disbanded in 1920, partly as a result of not being able to secure support for an undertaking of such ambitious proportions, partly as a result of not giving adequate attention to other fundamental considerations.

The Federal Council of the Churches and the interdenominational organizations of the missionary and educational agencies, which have had a slower, steadier and more constructive growth, have had their ups-and-downs and still have to contend with a great body of indifference, lack of proper support and even distrust, but there is general agreement that gratifying progress has been made. A survey of the work being done by the Federal Council today—in evangelism, Christian education, social service, temperance, working for better relations between the races and for international justice and goodwill, and in many other realms—indicates how wide a range of important activities is now being carried on cooperatively by the churches through the Council. The development of cooperation among the churches of local communities throughout the country, along lines indicated in the preceding section, has also been largely due to the work of the Federal Council.

In favor of independent, undenominational organization, one may record the following advantages:

(a) Larger freedom of action, permitting more extensive undertakings and quicker response to emergency needs.

(b) The development of an individual constituency of persons not interested in ecclesiastical organizations or procedure, but concerned deeply for the accomplishment of some specific task .

The interdenominational organization, under definite official control by the associated denominations, on the other hand, especially commends itself for the reason that it has a direct influence upon the spirit and attitude of the churches or church boards toward one another and toward their common tasks, bringing home to them their responsibility as churches for united action. The fact that the more recent cooperative organizations have been created on this basis seems to indicate a trend toward denominational direction, and the existence of a substantial background of interdenominational opinion and interest. The evidence of such a tendency is seen further in the increasing desire of independent agencies to secure denominational approval and consent, and otherwise to establish contacts with the church bodies.

The problem of securing effective moral and financial support is one that perplexes most of these cooperative endeavors, due partly to a failure on the part of the churches to appreciate their responsibility for what too many are still pleased to call "outside causes," and partly to the recent aggressive forward movements of the denominations which have pretty fully exhausted present available resources.

Undenominational agencies naturally depend chiefly on individual gifts, though some of them seek denominational support on the basis of the service they render to the churches. Interdenominational agencies are generally supported in whole or in large part by denominational contributions, and they consider this the ideal way. It is found that increase in denominational support is commonly accompanied by an increasing sense of responsibility for control and direction.

Differences of opinion naturally develop as to the extent to which cooperation should be carried. There are those who would make cooperative work largely consultative and suggestive, leaving to the denominational bodies well-nigh exclusive responsibility for actual missionary, educational, or other work. A growing body of opinion, however, regards the field of cooperation as practically unlimited, and would favor the acceptance by cooperative bodies, as rapidly as practicable, of all tasks which can be more effectively accomplished through cooperative endeavor. The answer to this question must no doubt be left to the processes of life and more extended experimentation.

Other problems that have developed in the cooperative movement may be summed up briefly as follows:

Cleavages of theological opinion and personal temperament.

The question of a more equitable place for women in the management of agencies in which they are equally involved.

Tendency of cooperative bodies to advance more rapidly than the constituent units will follow.

Centering of control in too small a group.

Indifference of constituent bodies.

Over against all these problems, difficulties and weaknesses, American experience in the Federal Council of the Churches and the inter-board agencies, has demonstrated the practicability of cooperation, has succeeded measurably in discovering the principles of effective cooperation, and is finding a growing public opinion in the churches in its favor.

B. In Canada

Cooperation in church work in Canada has taken two general forms. The first is seen in the program of Social Service. In the management and support of Rescue Homes for delinquent or wayward girls and women there has been joint action by two or more churches. Practically all the work of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches in this field is so organized. Evangelistic work also has been promoted by united action between the boards of the two denominations. In anti-alcoholic education and propaganda, in which the field of cooperation is wider, each church board has its own staff, which however, is more or less at the disposal of the joint board in special campaigns.

Twenty years ago the churches formed what is known as the Social Service Council of Canada, which is a federal board composed of units from the national boards of each denomination and financed by grants from the denominational units. This Council focusses the effort and organizes the influence of all the churches in cases where approach to the legislature of the Dominion or of the Provinces may be desirable and the whole program has worked out very satisfactorily, the only difficulty being the tendency to develop a more expensive program than the denominational units are ready to carry.

The plan of cooperation now in force among the several theological colleges in Montreal, in accordance with which most of the instruction is given in common, and the School of Missions in Toronto, maintained jointly by the missionary forces, are other striking illustrations of a growing interdenominational spirit and practice.

In the field of religious education there is a definitely federal scheme, The old Provincial Sunday School Associations have nearly all vanished. Instead there is the Provincial Religious Education Council which really unites the various denominational boards of religious education in cooperative effort, the Council being financed by grants from the denominational boards. The Council is moving in the direction of doing less independent work and becoming increasingly the office through which joint efforts are put forth by the boards themselves.

In the program of home missions, an arrangement has been worked out by the Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches, by which in sparsely settled communities where self-supporting churches are impossible, if carried on competitively, there will be only one church in a community. For more than twenty years this cooperation in the

effort to provide each community with religious ordinances and an evangelical ministry has been developing. The union of these three denominations into one Church has been finally ratified by each of them and by the Federal Parliament of Canada, and before the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work is held, the United Church of Canada will have become a fact. The Act of Incorporation makes provision that congregations not desiring to enter the Union may, by a majority vote of their members, decline to do so, retaining their congregational property and receiving through a commission an equitable share of the denominational property. There is a small minority in one of these communions strongly opposed to the Union and it seems likely that they will take advantage of the above provision and, for a time at least, continue an independent existence.

In many communities local union has definitely anticipated the union of the churches. Instead of an arrangement providing for a single denominational church, either Presbyterian or Methodist or Congregational, in the community, a congregation has been organized under the proposed constitution of the United Church of Canada. The extent to which this type of cooperation and local union had been carried may be estimated from the fact that before the United Church of Canada came into being on June 10th, 1925, at least 3700 congregations had entered upon the new order.

The experience of Canada, as of the United States, shows interdenominational cooperation to be both imperative and practicable; and while it is too soon to estimate the results of the great experiment Canada is making in the union of three great churches having diverse historical origin, it is certain the looking forward to this union has made possible a much larger measure of local cooperation, and it is generally agreed that from this forward step there will be no turning back.

II. ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS IN COOPERATION IN OTHER LANDS

A. The Orient

In no phase of the Church's work have there been greater incentives to cooperation than in foreign missions. In proportion as the Church has come to appreciate its missionary task, it has become conscious of an underlying unity. The divisions of western Christianity are largely meaningless to Christians of the East. When one finds oneself not among Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians and Lutherans, but among Buddhists, Mohammedans or Animists the difference between Christian denominations seems slight. In the light of Christianity as a whole, set over against the non-Christian faiths, the essential oneness of the various Christian bodies is more clear. It is, therefore, no occasion for surprise that there has been a strong development of cooperation in most of the foreign fields.

In higher educational work it has become the policy of most of the leading missionary societies to develop union institutions. In China alone, for example, there are more than a score of educational enterprises under interdenominational control, including the five union universities in Peking, Nanking, Tsinan-fu, Chengtu and Foochow. The Christian colleges for women, such as those in Lucknow, Nanking, Peking, Madras and Tokyo, are other notable illustrations. Even in theological education, interdenominational management has been found practicable, as is witnessed to by such seminaries and training-schools as those at Bangalore, Seoul, Manila, Nanking, Canton and others.

In medical work many instances of union efforts can also be given. The Severance Medical College and Hospital in Seoul is the center for practically all the missions in Southern Korea. The medical school for women at Vellore, South India, is jointly supported and controlled by no fewer than twelve British and American societies. In literary work the Christian Literature Societies of Japan and China and the Bible Societies, not official bodies directly representing the Churches but functioning acceptably for all of them, are other significant examples of the possibilities of cooperation in all fields.

Division of territory is an expedient which has been not infrequently adopted to prevent needless competition in missionary developments. In the Philippines, distinct fields have been assigned to several denominations. In parts of China, India, Korea, Madagascar and other countries similar plans, in varying degrees, have been put into operation.

In several countries, comprehensive agencies for furthering missionary cooperation, conferences and comity throughout the nation have come into being. Especially has this been so since the epoch-making World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910. In India, a National Missionary Council and Provincial Councils were established. In Japan there arose two important cooperative bodies, the Conference of Federated Missions and the Federation of Japanese Churches, comprising four-fifths of the Protestant Christians of Japan. These two are now superseded by the National Christian Council of Japan. In China the Continuation Committee, composed of individuals from the various missions, has now given place to the National Christian Council of China, as the outcome of ten years of experience culminating in the Shanghai Conference of 1922, and represents both the indigenous churches and the missions of nearly all Protestant denominations in a most significant program of common work.

In certain parts of the foreign field, the movement toward cooperation and unity has gone as far as actual organic union of the indigenous churches. In Japan, all branches of Methodism constitute a single Church. So also do the Japanese Christians of six Presbyterian and Reformed communions. The Canadian, English and American branches of the Anglican Church co-operate in China and Japan; the Canadian and English branches cooperate in India. In India the Lutherans are united. These cases illustrate only the union of separated branches

of the same general denominational family, but there are a few illustrations that cover wider ground. In South Fukien, for example, Chinese Christians from Congregational, Presbyterian and Reformed Missions, now constitute a single Church. The South India, United Church formed in 1908, includes the missionaries and Indian Christians of the American and the British Congregationalists, the Reformed Church of America and the United Free Church (Presbyterian) of Scotland.

B. In Latin American Countries.

Cooperative efforts in missions in Latin America are not of long standing. In 1913 a small committee was formed by the Foreign Missions Conference of North America to consider certain phases of the question. This grew into the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America. That Committee immediately began the preparation for the Panama Congress, at which there were representatives from more than fifty different organizations interested in the spiritual life of Latin America. Seven regional conferences were held in the important centers of Latin America immediately following the Congress and aided in outlining a comprehensive program for the whole field. Combined Christian forces found in these twenty nations a people united by a similar language, history, government, social structure and ideals, making possible a joint program for this continent and a half.

The Committee on Cooperation in Latin America acts as a clearing house for thirty different mission boards having work in Latin America. The Committee has always been officially representative of the mission boards themselves. Its functions are "consultative and advisory, not legislative and mandatory."

The Committee brings the mission boards around a common council table to discuss all their problems in Latin American work. It keeps a constant circle of helpful contacts and goodwill going through the mission boards. It pushes cooperative enterprises which would otherwise languish. It maintains helpful and broadening contacts with missionaries on the field. It makes for economy by doing for all of the boards work which individual boards would otherwise have to undertake. It represents the Evangelical Churches in many Pan-American movements which might otherwise overlook the importance of the Christian forces. It gives out a large amount of information to the press, schools, business concerns, and individuals concerning Latin America, keeping missionary work in these countries in the public mind. It arranges addresses and conducts classes on Latin American topics in churches, conferences, conventions and educational institutions. It is developing an ever widening acquaintance with the intellectual leaders in Latin America and undertakes to interpret to them the spirit and purpose of American Christianity.

There is now a general understanding between the various denominations concerning responsibility for certain assigned territories. The allocation of fields in Mexico is a notable example. There are regional Committees on Cooperation in each country. As in the Orient, so also

in Latin America, there are a large number of union presses and book stores, union theological seminaries and other union enterprises. In Santo Domingo a unique experiment in the whole missionary program has been begun. Instead of being satisfied with territorial allocations or certain union institutions, the boards interested in this field have formed a central agency by which the entire Christian enterprise on the island is to be developed and directed.

The principles of frank conference on all questions of general interest, of increasing cooperation in concrete programs and of official denominational representation in all cooperative enterprises, may be regarded as definitely established on the mission fields of both Asia and Latin America.

III. ACHIEVEMENTS IN COOPERATION OF THE WESTERN AND EASTERN CHURCHES

A matter requiring special attention is the development of closer relations between our Western Churches and the Eastern Churches.

The Anglican Church and the Episcopal Church in the United States have been in touch for many years with individual leaders in the Eastern Churches. The Anglican and Eastern Association has taken as its special work the development of union between the Episcopal Churches of the West and the Eastern Churches. Only in recent years, however, have direct contacts been made between the general group of Western Churches and Eastern Churches.

In recognition of the new opportunities for mutual helpfulness, the Patriarchate of Constinople has appointed a Special Committee on Relations with Other Churches. It is the expressed purpose of this Committee to maintain regular correspondence with our Western Churches on questions interesting our common Christendom. The Eastern Churches through their regular representatives stationed in America to watch over their communicants, and through special representatives and correspondents have given expression to the great unity in our underlying faith.

The work of the Young Men's Christian Association of North America has been a very important factor in this development of more cordial relations. In 1890 it established the Mayak (Lighthouse) in Petrograd. The membership was almost entirely Orthodox and Orthodox priests served freely. During the World War the Association ministered so acceptably to the Russian prisoners that when Patriarch Tikhon in 1918 was asked about the classes for Christian training in these camps, his answer was, "the more the better." Throughout Greece, the Balkans and the Near East the major portion of the membership, the staff and the moral and spritual support of the Associations is Orthodox and with rare exceptions they are actively encouraged by the highest Church authorities.

The Young Women's Christian Association in the last few years has opened centers in Constantinople, Bucharest, Riga and Revel. In all of these centers there is cooperation on the part of the Orthodox leaders.

The World's Student Christian Federation, of which the Student Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. are integral parts, has lately developed its organizations and service in the lands of the Eastern Churches, with full fellowship and cooperation betwen Eastern and Western Christians, without essential modification of its program of conferences, Bible study and evangelism.

There have also been friendly contacts of an important character developing through the various Foreign Mission Boards operating in the Near East, Near East Relief and the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches.

The World Alliance brought together the representatives of the Eastern Churches in Switzerland in 1920. This was the first time that such a delegation had met in conference with the members of the Western Churches. Another conference of leaders of all the Eastern Churches was held at Sinaia, Roumania, in 1924. The Patriarch of Constantinople and the heads of the Churches in the various Eastern countries, serving as permanent officers of the World Alliance give a constant contact between the Eastern and Western Churches. Too much cannot be said of the work of the late Robert H. Gardiner in bringing about a closer relationship between the Eastern and Western Churches. He was a pioneer in the conception that there could be a closer union between these groups and gave his life to its fulfillment.

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America has recently appointed a standing Committee on Relations with the Eastern Churches and at the last annual meeting of its Executive Committee representatives of the Eastern Churches had an important place on the program. A representative was sent by the Federal Council in the winter of 1921-22 into Russia to carry gifts that had been made by the American churches to the destitute clergy in Russia. Special efforts have also been made by the Federal Council to assist the Christian minorities in the Near East. The effort of the independent Committee on the Preservation of the Sacred Places in the Holy Land to help the Jerusalem Patriarchate is another concrete exhibition of brotherly sympathy.

As a result of these various influences making for closer fellowship between the East and the West there is being visualized more clearly the ideal of a united front not only for the Churches of the West but also for the Churches of Christendom, so far as they are willing to join in some kind of association or international council.

IV. ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS IN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The experience in cooperation as thus far described has been, in the main, the experience of the churches within the boundaries of a single nation. The rise of the foreign missionary movement has led the churches of the West into a world-wide ministry of helpfulness to other lands, but we have still to consider the development of any organized cooperation transcending national lines (except for a very limited cooperation between the United States and Canada). In entering upon this wider field, needless to say we encounter incalculably more difficult problems. The vastly greater extent of territory, the far wider range of divergences of view and practice, and, even more, the existence of strong nationalistic feelings and misunderstandings bring us face to face with an issue of tremendous proportions.

But the dimensions of the problem, when it is one of such paramount importance to the whole church, should be only a challenge to commensurate faith. And, happily, we are not without convincing evidence, even in this world field, of the practicability of cooperation. Indeed, the experience in international as well as interdenominational cooperation among the Churches is far greater than is usually recognized. A recent American volume entitled "International Christian Movements" lists and describes over thirty organizations of a denominational, interdenominational, or voluntary character, all of which are, in varying degrees, manifestations of the spirit of international unity among the evangelical churches, for the most part expressing the ideal of united service which is the subject of the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work. The Christian movement, it is not too much to say, is steadily becoming international as well as interdenominational.

The undenominational organizations, the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, have long had far-reaching world relationships, too well known to require comment. The World's Student Christian Federation for more than twenty-five years has been bringing students from all parts of the earth into closer fellowship and service. The Sunday School Movement and the Christian Endeavor Society have world organizations.

1. International Associations of the Denominations

The denominations themselves have been assuming a more œcumenical character, not only as a result of the missionary enterprise, which has extended their interest to all parts of the globe, but also as an outcome of the international gatherings of the members of the denominations from many lands at stated intervals during the last fifty years. As far back as 1867 the first Conference of Anglican Bishops throughout the world was held at Lambeth. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches Holding the Presbyterian System dates from 1875. Œcumenical Methodist Conference, from 1881. The International Congre-

gational Council (1891), the Baptist World Alliance (1905), and the Lutheran World Convention (1923) are more recent instances of the same general movement, which is giving an international outlook and ministering to international fellowship in each of the large denominations.

2. International Missionary Council

It is in the foreign missionary movement, as would naturally be expected, that the churches have first come to an official organization that is both interdenominational and international in character. The very nature of the missionary enterprise has been a prophecy of such a world-wide agency as the International Missionary Council, created in 1920. The way for the Council was prepared by the Continuation Committee of the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910. When the war made impossible the full fellowship represented by the Continuation Committee, an "emergency committee" undertook such international functions as were possible. In June, 1920, following many consultations of missionary leaders of different countries, there was held at Crans, Switzerland, a conference of delegates representing the various active national missionary organizations, at which the International Missionary Council was projected on a truly representative international basis. The Council is a delegated body, elected by the national missionary organizations of North America, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Germany, France, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Belgium, and the various mission fields.

The first regular meeting of the Council, as thus projected, was held at Lake Mohonk, N. Y., in October, 1921, eleven national organizations being represented. This Council formulated a constitution, which was referred to the constituent national organizations for approval, adopted a budget for the following biennium and elected officers. It assumed full responsibility for the publication of the *International Missionary Review*, established permanent headquarters at London and adopted the following four-fold statement of its purposes:

1. To stimulate thinking and investigation on missionary questions, to enlist in the solution of these questions the best knowledge and experience to be found in all countries, and to make the results available for all missionary societies and missions.

2. To help to co-ordinate the activities of the national missionary organizations of the different countries and of the societies they represent, and to bring united action where necessary in missionary matters.

3. Through common consultation to help to unite Christian public opinion in support of freedom of conscience and religion and of missionary liberty.

4. To help to unite the Christian forces of the world in seeking justice in international and interracial relations.

The last meeting of the Council, at Oxford, England, in July, 1923, marked significant progress in furthering these objectives.

The action of the Council is advisory only, for its organization is based on the principle "that the only bodies entitled to determine missionary policy are the missionary societies and boards or the churches which they represent, and the churches in the mission field." The Council is, however, constantly engaged in special studies and phases of work which are of the utmost value to all the participating societies.

3. International Relations of Federations

A new international relationship among the churches as a whole has lately been springing up through the development of national Federal Councils, or other federated bodies, and their fraternal relationships with each other. There are now such bodies in Great Britain, Switzerland, France, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Czecho-Slovakia, Australia, Japan, China and America, with all of which the Federal Council in America has established relationships. In some other countries the cooperative movement among the churches exists in the simpler form of joint committees.

The interests of these national councils or federations have become so clearly mutual that the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America has appointed a secretary, resident in Europe, whose entire time and service have been placed at the disposal of the European bodies, mainly in the interest of relief for needy nations and churches. The Central Bureau for Relief of the Evangelical Churches in Europe, through which these relationships are carried on, is, we believe, the first concerted approach toward a cooperative agency of official church bodies of Europe. While organized for a particular purpose, it has at the same time a stimulating influence on other cooperative and federative movements in Europe. It might perhaps even prove to be a stage on the way to a Federal Council of European Churches.

Matters of world concern, such as are undertaken by the League of Nations and its humanitarian commissions are frequently the subjects of conference, correspondence or cable messages between the federated church bodies of several countries. A striking example has been the frequent contacts between the Federation of Japanese Churches and the American Federal Council in the effort to develop friendship and understanding between the two nations. The departments of social service and inner mission work in several national federations have also found large common elements in their problems.

4. International Relations Through the World Alliance for International Friendship

The World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches, with Councils in twenty-eight countries, has become an indispensable and effective agent of Christian cooperation across national

lines in the great common task of securing world peace. Its service in ministering to international understanding and goodwill has been inestimable. In most of the countries of Europe the councils of the World Alliance are appointed by the authority of the churches, so that they are in a position to represent the churches officially in matters pertaining to world peace and friendship.

5. The Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work

The Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work is itself a significant expression of the international cooperative movement as a whole and will doubtless be expected to consider its further development in the way of organization.

V. PRINCIPLES WHICH SHOULD GOVERN THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATION

From the past experience of the churches in cooperation certain principles emerge which have been found essential and which should clearly guide us in further developments. The more important of these principles may be briefly summarized as follows:

1. The cooperation needed must be positive. It must grow out of definite convictions held in common and a definite purpose and a unity of spirit shared. Since the revelation which God has made of himself in Jesus Christ is the central truth of Christianity, any cooperative movement that is to express adequately the life of the churches must rest upon a common conviction concerning Him as Lord and Saviour, grow out of real experience of life with Him and express itself in unselfish service in His name.

2. Unity must be understood to be very different from uniformity. A sign of life in a tree is that it divides continually into branches and twigs. The principle is that there is one trunk and many branches, for "as we have many members in one body and all members have not the same office, so we being many are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another." Our Lord's word, "I am the vine, ye are the branches," indicates that diversity in unity is necessary for flowers and fruit. There was a time when the church sought to coerce all its members into using the same forms and the same language for purposes of worship, but when new life came in through the Reformation diversity began to manifest itsef, within a common unity in essentials.

3. Interdenominational cooperation must rest on an inclusive rather than an exclusive basis. It must recognize and make room for the richness of historic tradition and of religious experience which the various groups of Christian believers can bring. We must aim at comprehension, not at omission or elision.

4. It is possible to cooperate without reference to organic union. Cooperation is practicable on the basis of the spirit of unity already

existing, should grow naturally out of it and will prepare the way for still larger unity. Indeed, a larger measure of union is likely to come only as the result of the increasing fellowship, understanding and trust that spring from joining hand-in-hand in common tasks.

5. The larger cooperation and unity required are best produced along the two following lines of endeavor:

(a) Seeking such spiritual awakening as will bring all who are federated into so complete a union with Christ that they will discover that they are closely united to each other as members of Christ's body. It is this which more than anything else will remove competition and unfriendly rivalry among Christians.

(b) Presenting to the federated bodies so great and inspiring a task that they will allow no minor differences to stand in the way of a united performance of that task. It is for this reason that the missionary movement has been such an inspirer of cooperation. It has brought the church back to the point of view which transcends all national boundaries, and recognizes as brothers the men of every race, color, or stage of civilization.

6. Cooperation and federation are possible with full freedom in expression. This is seen, for example, in the work of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, in which nearly twenty million Protestant communicants join in common programs without experiencing any external coercion of any sort and without sacrificing anything of what any denomination regards as essential. Illustrations are also at hand in the Foreign Missions Conference of North America and other interdenominational organizations.

7. A true denominationalism and interdenominationalism are not antithetical. No federation can ever become effective and powerful if the denominational units that comprise it are weak and inefficient. The spirit of sectarianism is, of course, fatal to cooperation, but a growing sense of unity within each denomination and a clear recognition by each denomination of its corporate responsibility should minister to a readiness to join with others in great tasks that no denomination can achieve alone. One of the obstacles to interdenominational cooperation in the past has been the lack of unity within many a denomination itself. Whatever truly unites Christians more closely within each denomination will lead to that larger unity which united them to their fellow Christians of other names.

8. A cooperative movement ought to be directly representative of the churches themselves and ought to be directly responsible to them. Otherwise it can not truly speak or act in the name of the denominations. Unless its policies and programs are controlled by the denominations, through properly accredited representatives, it cannot hope to retain permanently their confidence and trust. The interdenominational program, whatever form it takes ought to be such that it will be regarded by each of the cooperating bodies as being as truly its own as the work done within the denomination itself.

VI. ADVANCED STEPS NOW CALLED FOR

In general, it may be said that there are five clearly discernible and urgently necessary measures of further advance before us.

1. The Christian denominations separately, and in consequence associatedly, must discern more clearly than they do the true functions of the church, its duties and its problems.

2. The Christian denominations in each nation need some central agency of cooperation possessing full trust and responsibility, controlled and directed by them.

3. The denominations possessing and directing this agency should use it fully and discharge through it their common duties, instead of leaving them to independent, undenominational agencies which act either in part or not at all in the name of the church.

4. Between the churches of all lands there should be developed international understanding and fellowship, with such international instrumentalities as are necessary for the discharge of the international duties of the churches.

5. Interdenominational and international cooperation is possible only when men trust one another and have in their central loyalty to Christ a bond of union stronger than any of the tendencies of division.

The problems which these advanced steps involve in the field of interdenominational action are not different in kind from those which exist inside each denomination. Interdenominational trust and unity, even international trust and unity, rest on the same principles as intradenominational trust and unity. They all involve one simple problem, can the diversity of the body be preserved in the unity of the Head?

That there is an indispensable need for some international organization of the Christian forces seems to us too obvious to admit of doubt. Such an organization, it must be made entirely clear, should have no external authority over any denomination. On the contrary its own authority must come only from the common counsels and agreements among the denominations or national groups that comprise it. As to the particular form or method of organization that will best minister to the world's need there will probably be difference of opinion. The following appear to be possible forms that the proposed organizations might take, growing out of the experience recorded in the previous pages of this report.

1. An international undenominational alliance; that is, an agency whose membership should be drawn from the churches of all lands but without any official capacity or delegated responsibility. Such an organization, while doubtless the most easy to form, could hardly give adequate expression to the fundamental principles that we have considered above.

2. An international alliance of denominational international agencies; that is, some kind of comprehensive association comprising such units as the Lambeth Conference, the Lutheran World Convention, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches Holding the Presbyterian System, the Methodist Œcumenical Conference and the Baptist World Alliance. It must be borne in mind, however, that these denominational alliances are themselves very loosely organized and that a body formed from them would necessarily be looser still.

3. An international council of national denominations. This would afford the most directly representative form of organization. The most serious problem would arise from the great number of denominations in most countries and the difficulty of securing the presence of so many representatives at international meetings.

4. An international council of national Federations of Churches; that is, an inclusive council composed of the representatives of bodies like the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, the French Protestant Federation, the Deutsche Evangelische Kirchen Bund, the Swiss Federation of Churches, and the official agencies of interchurch cooperation in the other lands. There are, of course, important countries in which no such council or federation exists, but it may well be doubted whether the churches of these lands would be likely to join in effective cooperation internationally until they had first begun to deal cooperatively with their own problems at home. The existence and work of a international council, moreover, would probably serve as a stimulus to the establishment of national councils in countries where they have not yet developed.

This international cooperation—whatever be the form it takes—will be furthered and in no sense impaired, by the maximum achievement of cooperation or union in more limited areas or among smaller groups. Whatever progress toward unity may be made, for example, among the various Methodist Churches or the various Presbyterian Churches in America; whatever may be accomplished in bringing together all the churches of a single nation, like Canada; whatever may be done to strengthen the bonds between the branches of the same denominational family in different nations of the world, will all contribute to the larger goal we seek.

Finally it must be kept constantly in mind that certain habits of mind and qualities of spirit both promote and are promoted by cooperative service. These habits of mind should be sedulously cultivated—"the habit of thinking of others' interests as if they were our own, of trying to enter into the nature of their experience and to see things as they see them, of inculcating in those whom we can influence this catholic and sympathetic spirit, and of making place for it in our educational program and in our religious publications; above all, of complete frankness and confidence in our dealing with one another."

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